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## OPENING STATEMENT FOR MR. WELDON

### Chairman, Research and Development Subcommittee House Armed Services Committee

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I want to thank my good friend and ranking member, Owen Pickett and all of my colleagues for joining me today to conduct the mark-up of the Research & Development portion of the fiscal year 2000 defense authorization bill. Before we begin with consideration of the Chairman's mark, I would like to provide you with a brief overview of what I consider some key issues addressed in the mark.

You should have before you a package of information that includes copies of all bill language and directive report language contained in Title II and a detailed list of service program highlights included in the mark.

This mark takes an important step toward correcting the repeated sacrifice of critical research and development funding in order to pay for the increasing unfunded deployments of our military. We have all heard the Department of Defense tell us that this year, modernization is finally receiving increased funding. Upon closer examination, we find that procurement, only one part of actual modernization, is increasing by \$4 billion. The hidden story is that R&D, the foundation of all future modernization, was decreased by over \$3 billion from last year's level.

I fully support the increases in procurement of badly needed new equipment for our military forces as I'm sure most of us on this subcommittee do. However, I do not support the use of vital research and development accounts as a bank to provide the funds for these procurement increases. The problems are made even worse by the DOD headlines claiming that this budget has big increases in modernization.

The truth is that while procurement funding is finally increasing, although nowhere near the amounts needed according to our uniformed military leaders, R&D is continuing to decline. As many of you can attest, the impact of this decline is no longer invisible. Far too many of the military's top priority development programs are experiencing schedule delays and development risks which are attributed mainly to lack of adequate funding — not technical problems. A little known fact that I want to share with the subcommittee is that included, — if not buried — in those same service chief's unfunded priorities lists provided to the committee, are **over \$920 million of R&D priorities**, many of which we have tried to correct in this mark.

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Other disturbing trends that this mark addresses are the negative effects of the decline in early research and science & technology funding when combined with the increasing percentage of R&D dollars devoted to development for legacy systems. **Over 33 percent** of this year's decreased R&D budget is invested in trying to keep our existing systems operational.

While many of the military's current systems are indeed old and in need of repair and enhancements, if this trend of sacrificing future R&D investments for fixes to legacy systems continues, we will be unable to mature the technologies necessary to replace these older, costly systems with the new technologies, and risk losing the technological advantage we have for so long taken for granted.

Clearly we on the R&D subcommittee and the full committee cannot totally correct years of decline in R&D investments, including the \$3 billion decrease in this year's request. I believe, however, that our R&D mark will provide badly needed additional dollars for a number of key R&D programs.

It is my hope that by pulling together and working with the other defense committees of the House and Senate, we can send a strong signal to the Administration that we do not support the shell game going on with defense funding and believe that operational deployments, backlogs in procurement and research & development for future modernization are all of equal importance and must be adequately funded to properly support the military forces that we send in harm's way.

As your information indicates, the R&D mark-up contains additional funds for the areas of R&D under the jurisdiction of this subcommittee. It also includes increases in 6.4 EMD funding which are under the jurisdiction of the Procurement subcommittee, but affect R&D programs which we work closely on with our Procurement Subcommittee colleagues.

The mark also includes increases in a number of intelligence programs over which the House Armed Services Committee and the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence share jurisdiction. These programs offer to provide significantly enhanced capabilities for both the military services and the intelligence community and I have asked the staff to cover some of the highlights of these programs for the members.

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